

STUDENT MASTER

Say No to Non-Point Source Pollution

Estuary pollution starts upstream, perhaps hundreds of miles away, deep inside the watershed. No matter where you live in the watershed, you can help decrease the levels of non-point source (NPS) water pollution that contribute to estuary pollution. Take a look at the following good ideas for fighting water pollution:

Good Idea	Description
Properly dispose of oil and household chemicals.	If there's a leak of gasoline or oil from your car or lawnmower, have it fixed immediately. Do not dump old oil into storm sewers when changing the car's oil. Do not flush old prescription or non-prescription medicines. Take household chemicals (cleaners, paint, pesticides, etc.) and expired medicines to neighborhood Hazardous Chemical days and have professionals dispose of them properly.
Use lawn and garden products wisely.	Fertilizers used on lawns and gardens can lead to increased levels of nutrients and chemicals in runoff and groundwater. Read the labels on the package and do not over apply. Insecticides and herbicides can also cause problems and need to be used with care.
Let the water soak into the ground.	The best idea is to let water soak into the ground. This decreases rapid runoff, which decreases the chances of flooding and soil erosion. If your family washes your car at home, park it on the grass instead of on the driveway when you wash the car. That way the water will soak into the ground instead of running off into the storm sewer.
Recycle glass, paper, and plastic.	Organize a neighborhood or town Clean Up Day to remove paper, plastic, and glass garbage from roadsides, etc. The less waste there is, the less waste there will be washed into storm sewers or making its way down rivers and streams.
Control animal waste.	Pet waste (e.g., dog poop) is another non-point source of excess nutrients (and harmful E.coli bacteria) in the water. Make sure everyone picks up after their pets and disposes of pet waste properly.

Procedure

1. Can you think of any additional ideas for reducing the NPS pollution that pollutes the estuaries? Record your ideas on a separate sheet of paper.
2. Choose your favorite idea from the table above and from your list of additional ideas. Is this idea something you can do yourself or does it need a larger group or team? Is it something for individuals to carry out or does it require community effort? Predict what would happen if you could actually put a team of people together to carry out that good idea. Write your prediction on a sheet of paper.